

THE CASTRO REGIME'S ONGOING  
VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 18, 2016*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, it has been one year and eight months since President Obama announced a major change in our country's policy towards Cuba.

It has been eleven months since Secretary Kerry visited Havana and reopened our embassy.

And it has been nearly four months since our President visited Cuba.

Clearly, a lot has changed in just over a year and a half.

But for the people of Cuba, what has changed?

At a hearing I convened last week, we examined the sorry state of civil and political rights in the Castro brothers' Cuba, and how, despite all the promises by this administration that an opening to Cuba will lead to a greater opening domestically for the Cuban people we still see political repression—including, it must be noted, repression directed at the Afro-Cuban population.

This is not the first time this subcommittee has expressed concern about the lack of openness to democracy and dissent in Cuba. In fact, one of our witnesses, the courageous Dr. Oscar Biscet, offered dramatic testimony before this subcommittee in February of 2012, when he testified via telephone from the U.S. Interests Section in Havana after evading the Cuban police to get there.

Likewise, on February 5, 2015 we held a hearing entitled "Human Rights in Cuba: An opportunity squandered," wherein we asked whether the Obama administration had used the considerable leverage that it wields to seek to better the condition of the Cuban people, or whether it was squandering the opportunity.

Since then, our fear that the administration has not been pushing sufficiently for the release of political prisoners and other human rights concerns has only grown, with the focus on Obama's "legacy" instead of the Cuban people.

For example, when President Obama made his visit to Cuba, he and Raul Castro appeared in a photo op press conference. CNN's Jim Acosta, much to his credit, asked the hard question about Cuba's political prisoners.

Raul Castro, much to his discredit, denied that there were ANY political prisoners in Cuba. "Give me a list of the political prisoners and I will release them immediately," Castro taunted. "Just mention the list."

And President Obama just stood there.

Well, Mr. President, I have a list, of more than fifty political prisoners compiled by my good friend and colleague ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN.

This is a list that President Obama should have had in breast pocket, ready to pull out when Raul Castro dared him to call his bluff.

When I came to Congress in 1981, with Ronald Reagan, in the days of the old Soviet Union, one of the first issues I worked on was the plight of Soviet Jews and refuseniks who were either imprisoned or not allowed to leave the Soviet Union. I recall George Shultz, when

he was Secretary of State, saying that whenever he met with his Soviet counterpart, and from him down to the lowest State Department officer, he would bring with him a list of imprisoned dissidents and human rights advocates. Front and center of any discussion, whether about nuclear arms or tensions in the Middle East, Secretary Shultz would bring up dissidents, naming them by name. It was this constant focus on human rights that helped move the Soviet government to allow Jews and others to leave the Soviet Union, people such as the great Natan Sharansky.

And I have another list of names, that of six members of the Cuban National Front of Civic Resistance who have applied for visas to come to the United States but for some reason, inexplicably, our State Department has refused to allow to visit the United States. These are:

Orlando Gómez Echavarría  
Jose Alberto Alvarez Bravo  
Yaite Diasnell Cruz Sosa  
Yoel Bravo López  
Lázaro Ricardo Fiallo López  
Ciro Aleixis Casanova Pérez

I call upon Secretary Kerry to allow these brave people entry to the United States, so that they can meet with me and my colleagues and enlighten us further as to the current state of affairs in Cuba.

Finally, I note that the administration has failed to secure the release of fugitives from justice such as Joanne Chesimard, who is on the FBI's Most Wanted Terrorist list, convicted of killing New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster. The administration must insist upon the unconditional return of Chesimard and all other fugitives from justice, as well as demand that the Castro regime respect the civil and political rights of the Cuban people, before making any further concessions.

And to underscore the point, unconditional means unconditional—there should be no "swap" whereby we exchange convicted Cuban spies Ana Montes or Kendall Meyers for these fugitives as a concession to the Castro regime. The effect of that would be to trade Americans who have committed crimes in the United States for other Americans who have committed crimes in the United States, demoralizing our intelligence community further in the process.

With that, I want to turn to our witnesses, noting as I do that last week, on July 13, it was the anniversary of the tugboat massacre of 1994, when 37 victims, including 11 children, were killed by the regime. How little has changed for the Cuban people.

POEM BY ALBERT CAREY  
CASWELL IN HONOR OF ARNOLD  
SCHWARZENEGGER

**HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, July 18, 2016*

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following poem written by Albert Carey Caswell in honor of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's upcoming 69th birthday.

69 REPS TO BE THE BEST  
(By Albert Carey Caswell)

69 reps to be the best  
Do we lead or do we rest?

Do we build on our success?  
Do we fall or do we crest?  
Do we follow or do we lead?  
To give our world what she so needs  
Do we live large not narrow?  
Do we work out and do it now oh?  
Do we crush it,  
To find victory as such it  
Only by living the golden rule,  
Will we so shine like a jewel  
Pumping up our world so full  
Telling fear see you later  
Why you could even be the governor  
Scheduling doubt for termination  
Eraser  
Telling it to "get out"  
Don't be afraid to fail  
That's the only way victory to nail  
To make dynamic gains  
You must feel the burn, the pain  
And what will we create,  
With each new rep that we so take  
For the greatness we so yearn  
69 reps to be the best  
You must give your heart and soul  
To turn your dreams into gold  
By stretching ourselves beyond belief,  
For victory to achieve  
As your dreams you seek  
Saying "hasta la vista baby" to living meek  
Leaving dynamic gains all in your wake  
As quadzilla steps you take  
All in what our heart's create  
Don't be a girly man  
Like a commando take a stand  
69 reps to be the best  
And what is the true measure of a man?  
Who before us now so stands  
For life is so very short  
So then what is it that we all hope to sport?  
All in the days of our lives report  
And who do we lift up?  
When in tough times never giving up?  
To make our lives so buff  
All in our reps of life's as such  
Do we dare to push the envelope?  
To make dynamic gains all in our approach  
All in what our heart's invoke  
For we only have so many rep's to our world  
bless  
To be the best  
We must be bold,  
We must be strong  
We must work hard all day and night long  
If we wish to write our life's song  
And as the years progress some of us shall  
not grow old  
Men like arnold never do so  
Whose heart's never run cold  
With his heart of a child so yo  
Who see's the good in all he beholds  
Whose smile to all heart's call so  
Who never stop's believing as new dreams he  
conceiving  
For he knows not the word defeat even  
And failure is not an option conceiving  
All in his austrian-american heart which is  
beating  
Is a heart of a child who against all odds is  
competing  
As he let's his dreams run wild  
With his greatest of all smiles and cham-  
pionship style  
If you want to get to the mountain top?  
There's only one way, straight up  
69 rep's, but there's a lot more left  
In this american hero to flex  
Maybe, sixty-nine more?  
"work out, do it now" "crush it" "get in the  
chopper"  
69 rep's to be the best.